

May 6, 2002

SUBJECT: Authorization to Apply for and use Funds from Outside
Sources: Letter of Intent and ARS Form 425

TO: Center Directors, Research Leaders, SYs (Category I & IV)

FROM: Wilda H. Martinez, Area Director

In response to Agency emphasis on extramural funding, Dr. Buxton has issued two memoranda reiterating the requirements for **prior approval** of extramural proposals by NPS via submission of the ARS 425 form. Given the expressed need for a timely response, he has also set a target clearance timeframe from NPS of three days. Form 425 is required for Authorization to Apply for and use Funds from Outside Sources (see attached).

From the North Atlantic Area (NAA) perspective, the Form 425 fails to provide much of the information needed to make an adequate evaluation of the appropriateness and relevance of the proposed research to the Agency, location and parent CRIS project.

To overcome this limitation, NAA **will now require a Letter of Intent in all instances before a scientist initiates any type of research collaboration with a non-ARS scientist**. This includes submission of a grant proposal to any funding agency, support for SBIR, IFAFS, or other type of proposal, or to establish any type of joint effort with an outside entity that may or may not include an exchange of resources, e.g., a CRADA.

The Letter of Intent must be submitted in the following format via e-mail.

SUBJECT: Letter of Intent

TO: Wilda H. Martinez, Area Director

THROUGH: Center Director (if applicable)
Research Leader

FROM: Scientist

I am submitting a request to (e.g., establish a research agreement with, submit a proposal to)

Provide where appropriate, name(s) and institution of the
collaborators and anticipated duration of the agreement or proposal.

Briefly describe what you will do, what the collaborator will do, what you will do together, and why this work is relevant to CRIS “supply title of applicable CRIS Project.”

Provide estimated ARS CRIS expenditures, including SY time, and/or anticipated incoming resources and their use.

Please reply to this e-mail with a response noted/below.

APPROVED:_____	INITIALS
DISAPPROVED:_____	RL APPROVED:_____
	CD APPROVED:_____

COMMENTS:

cc: Program Analyst (helen.begley@ars.usda.gov)
Extramural Agreements Specialist (ingrid.charlton@ars.usda.gov)
Technology Transfer Coordinator (cgcrawford@arserrc.gov)

The description of the project should be succinct but contain enough information that the recipients will know what each participant will contribute, why their contribution is important to the success of the project, and how this project is relevant to the ongoing CRIS research.

The expenditure information is needed to determine, in part, what type of formal agreement will be established to cover the project.

The request for this information, prior to the initiation of a collaboration, is to ensure that research time and public funding support is in compliance with CRIS guidelines: it is not intended to inhibit collaboration with other scientists or organizations that can enhance and extend funded research projects.

In those instances requiring submission of a Form 425, concurrent submission of the Letter of Intent and the Form 425 to both NPS and the Area is acceptable **only if time is critical to submission.**

To ensure that this process is timely, the National Program Staff has promised to reply to the ARS 425 within three days. If no reply from NPS or the Area is sent within seven working days, the request will be considered approved.

Enclosures

cc:
D. R. Buxton
H. S. Parker

J. A. Crew
C. G. Crawford
I. S. Charlton
H. T. Begley
LAOs

United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

February 15, 2002

SUBJECT: ARS-425 “Authorization to Apply For and Use Funds From Outside Sources”

TO: Area Directors

FROM: Dwayne R. Buxton /s/
Deputy Administrator

In 1995, the Policies and Procedures (P&P) 321.1 on “Acceptance of Non-Appropriated Funds to Conduct Research or Perform Services” was revised in order to streamline the paperwork and approval process and to enable funding to be received in a timely and efficient manner.

In accordance with P&P 321.1, the Form ARS-425 “Authorization to Apply For and Use Funds From Outside Sources” is to be fully approved before a proposal can be submitted to a potential source of outside funds. In addition, the research should support the mission of ARS, should be of mutual interest to ARS and the outside source of funds, should supplement without detracting from the programs of the scientist and the unit performing the work, and should be related to the expertise and assignment of the individual(s) performing the work.

Over the years since the streamlining process, the approval process has become somewhat relaxed. Therefore, we are re-emphasizing that the ARS-425 must be entered in ARIS/ARIS and fully approved through the Area Director if under \$25,000 and, if over \$25,000, through the National Program Staff before any proposal is submitted to an outside source of funding.

If there are any questions or concerns, please let me know.

cc:

E. Kniplng, OA

C. Rexroad, Jr., OA

J. Stetka, NPS

Associate Deputy Administrators, NPS

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March 5, 2002

SUBJECT: Followup to ARS-425 Memo

TO: Area Directors

FROM: Dwayne R. Buxton /s/
Deputy Administrator

As a followup to my memo dated February 15, 2002, I am providing further guidance and information regarding the processing of form ARS-425, "Authorization to Apply For and Use Funds from Outside Sources."

As previously stated, the ARS-425 must be approved prior to submitting a proposal to outside sources for funding. The ARS-425 should be initiated near the beginning of the grant proposal writing process, not at the end. Scientists should not wait until the proposal is complete to submit ARS-425. The ARS-425 requires a minimal amount of information that needs to be entered and should be known to scientists at the beginning of the proposal writing process.

From the National Program Staff (NPS) standpoint, we are changing our approval process to eliminate any untimely delays. NPS will initiate a new approval process that will allow us to complete our evaluation of ARS-425s within three working days. This new process should eliminate concerns that scientists may have about not receiving timely decisions which could prevent them from submitting their proposals to the funding organizations by the designated deadlines.

cc:

E. Kniplng, OA

C. Rexroad, Jr., OA

Associate Deputy Administrators, NPS

J. Stetka, NPS